The next item was pepper cultivation. Pepper was indigenous to Travancore and its growth was guaranteed by Nature. Almost all parts of the State, excepting a few localities, were quite suited to its cultivation. The expenditure involved as compared with the cultivation of other products was small and the remuneration derived great, a single tree sometimes yielding as much as Rs. 30 per annum. The facilities afforded by the presence of trees on which the vine could be grown were immense. Pepper was a commodity in demand all over the world, Malabar pepper maintaining its supremacy even today in the markets of the world. Pepper was not subject to any pest or disease nor was it exposed to trouble from cattles. The soil and climate being favourable to its luxuriant growth, it did not require much artificial manuring or great attention. The yield began from the third year. In view of the above facilities, the Member advocated the opening of pepper farms for the benefit of the people in convenient and suitable rural areas.

Cattle-breeding was another important aspect of agricultural work. The Department of Agriculture had made praiseworthy attempts to improve the cattle, but the rate of progress made was not as rapid as one would wish. One of the best means of preventing the deterioration was by locating seed-bulls, not in urban areas as at present, but in villages. Another way of tackling the problem was by opening more Veterinary Hospitals. The cattle in the Quilon Division were subject to a serious danger. A large number were being imported from British India. But they were often found to be suffering from some cattle disease or other, the contagion of which spread to the herds of local cattle. The suggestion of the Member to prevent the evil was that a Veterinary Inspector should be posted at Arienkavoo to examine such herds of cattle as were suffering from any contagious disease and prevent their being imported into the State. A great desideratum was grazing ground for cattle which should be provided in different localities.

Lastly, the Member prayed that a Cattle Census be taken at least once in two years and that cattle statistics be published in the Gazette once in every quarter as was done in other countries.

Dewan's reply.—The suggestions of the Members are noted for consideration. As regards Cattle Census, there is already a proposal to take a Census of the cattle in the State next year and arrangements are being made for it.

46. Desirability of increasing the usefulness of the Agricultural Department.

Mr. K. N. Parameswaran Pillai (Member, Chirayinkil taluk) represented that, though the Department of Agriculture had been in existence for the past 9 years, agriculturists had not applied themselves seriously to scientific agriculture and nothing had been done yet to enhance the productive capacity of the soil. In order to make the department more useful to the country and the ryot population, the Member made the following suggestions for the consideration of Government:—

(1) Demonstrations in ploughing with improved implements, in single seedling transplantation and the application of scientific manure had not been carried on successfully owing to the paucity of officers in the department. Additional officers should be appointed for the purpose.

(2) Greater attention should be paid to experimental work, and experimental stations should be opened in important agricultural centres. More paddy farms should be established in the State. It was also necessary to start one cocoanut farm in the Chirayinkil taluk, one sugar-cane farm in North Travancore, one pepper farm in Minachil taluk and one tapioca farm in Nedumangad or Neyyattinkara. The Trivandrum Experimental Farm must exist mainly for plantains and the work in the Kottarakara Farm should be confined to root crops. Cattle-breeding stations, like the one at Trivandrum, and Veterinary dispensaries, should be established in suitable localities in South, Central and North Travancore. Dairy-farming should also be demonstrated on a small scale near important stations.

(3) The Agricultural Journal should be published monthly and the results of experiments and demonstrations circulated as leaflets from time to time. Agricultural knowledge should be disseminated with greater vigour among the ryots by means of

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lectures at cattle fairs, religious gatherings, &c. Agricultural schools should be started where teachers in the Education Department, *bona fide* ryots and revenue officers should be given instruction in the theory and practice of Agriculture. Elementary Agriculture should be made compulsory in Classes V, VI and VII in Vernacular schools.

(4) The question of Agricultural Co-operation and Agricultural loans should receive better attention at the hands of Government.

Dewan's reply.—Noted.

The Assembly adjourned at 5-10 P. M.

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